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SOME GOOD CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

BY LAURA ASHMORE TODD.



EVERYBODY knows that weeks before the gala day makes its appearance gifts pretty and suitable are sure to find a place in the feminine mind. Goods to be selected with taste and many times articles to be bought with the money saved up, perhaps for six weeks at least, before even December comes on apace.

With the mother of a family what economies are practised, what pleasures denied! Even a party of pretty girls lay aside their price of a matinee ticket and go without an extra furbelow for some charming trinket to send a friend. To all women Christmas means so much. When near the day there is generally a fever—a high fever—that takes possession of all generous minds. To see others shop is to catch the disease, and the insane desire to go morning, noon and night to these emporiums where these pretty trifles are for sale.

Surely, this is the age of silver and gold, for this season gold on solid silver, set with jewels, will be more gorgeous, more magnificent than ever before.

Among the splendid affairs are boxes square in form, long and narrow, and that heart-shape effect which has been so popular for the last year. Forms, naturally, do not change, but designs and patterns vary.

For this coming holiday toilet articles seem to outdo themselves. We have low, round-cut glass receptacles for cold cream, with a superb top of heavy make in gold on solid silver, set with precious stones, in starlike effects of turquoises, carbuncles, amethysts. To accompany these there are vinaigrettes and smelling-bottles in combinations of jewels. These range in different sizes, and are from nine to twenty-five dollars apiece, and the more elaborate ones are as high as thirty, many of them with a top of fine chased-gold, and ornamented with the miniature of some queen.

As an adornment for dressing-glasses there is a comb and hair-brush, a clothes-brush of excellent size, a very small one for hats, together with a hand-mirror, which can be hung. All these beautiful articles are of gold on solid silver, and are chased with miniatures of

celebrated characters, and run in price from fifteen to twenty-five dollars each, and are well worth it.

Added to these artistic toilet accessories are jewel-boxes which, for splendor of appearance, nothing can exceed. Many are elaborate with precious stones, many rich in chase designs, but many are in plain gold, finely finished with jewels in rows—in octagon shapes—and yet some have only one stone of value for a centre ornamentation.

Now, one of the richest, one of the handsomest, is of Empire design. It rests on four feet, is heavily chased in flower effects, and four small miniatures decorate the top. The heads are all painted in exquisite coloring, the dresses in sombre hues, while the box itself is sumptuously lined with pale blue velvet. This handsome article can be purchased for one hundred dollars. Still, there are others of simpler make but equally rich. They are round, square, in triangle, long, narrow, heart-shape, all set with small stones—one a topaz, one a carbuncle, one an amethyst—all elegant gifts to be sent on Christmas morn, and range in price from fifteen dollars to one hundred and fifty, according, of course, to size, and well worth it.

As to novelties that have just struck the market, the silver lamp is one of the newest, an object made after an old French pattern, with fine and good decorations. It stands on two feet, which, of course, gives it great style for any table, and has for a shade a chiffon in white and gilt. These lamps serve as corner-pieces for the formal dinner, and as a work of art in silver they are beyond doubt unsurpassed.

It must be known that as an extra adornment in gold and silver novelties the feet on many objects will be the leading fad, and show themselves for lamps, bon-bon trays, jewel-boxes, baskets and the like.

Very beautiful is the new fern-dish. It is of a commodious size, oxidized in treatment, on silver, in fruits and flowers. It also stands on two feet; the inner cover is a gold pan in which, on the bottom, is a series of small holes, which serves as a drainer. This novelty, if desired, will cost one hundred dollars, and will last as a legacy for any family.

Another very elegant silver affair is a splendid epergne, the borders magnificently chased, also the stand. This can be used for flowers or fruit; and, to make this more complete, there are four smaller ones of the exact pattern of the larger one, which are used as corner-pieces for a dinner decoration. Cost, two hundred dollars.

Then there are open-work bon-bon accessories, which also stand on tiny feet, and bring from eleven to fifteen dollars each.



SILVER VASE PRESENTED TO THE HON. WILLIAM MCKINLEY, OCT. 30, 1896, BY THE EMPLOYEES OF THE MAUSER MFG. CO., SILVERSMITHS, NEW YORK CITY. VALUE, \$300.00.

INSCRIPTION.—"IN SILVER WE BELIEVE, WHEN REDEEMABLE IN GOLD."